

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 MCT-01 /090 W

-----071656Z 105089 /43

R 071515Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5725

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L NIAMEY 0118

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, NG

SUBJ: ESCAPE OF SANI SIDO

1. FRENCH EMBASSY HAS REPORT THAT FORMER VICE PRESIDENT AND MINISTER OF MINES SANI SIDO, JAILED BY KOUNTCHE IN AUGUST 1975 FOR POLTTING, HAS ESCAPED FROM MILITARY CAMP IN AGADEZ AND MAY BE IN LIBYA. VARIATION ON STORY IS THAT SANI HAS SOUGHT REFUGE IN LIBYAN CONSULATE IN AGADEZ. ALTHOUGH FRENCH SEEM LESS THAN CERTAIN ABOUT DETAILS, THEY HAVE ENOUGH SOURCES AMONG MILITARY IN AGADEZ TO SUGGEST STORY IS MORE THAN FABRICATION OF NIGER'S EVER ACTIVE RUMOR MILL.

2. APPREHENSION ABOUT SANI'S ESCAPE CAN BE COUNTED ON TO AUGMENT TENSIONS WHICH HAVE ARISEN IN PAST FEW DAYS FROM ONGOING STUDENT STRIKE (NIAMEY 0092 NOTAL). STUDENT BOYCOTT IS CONTINUING JANUARY 7 UNABATED WHILE GON
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MAINTAINS TOTAL SILENCE IN PRESS AND RADIO ABOUT WHAT IS PROVING TO BE AN INCREASINGLY EMBARRASSING CHALLENGE TO ITS AUTHORITY. THUS WE ARE PROBABLY MOVING INTO ANOTHER PERIOD OF POLITICAL TOUCHINESS WITH MOUNTING SECURITY PRECAUTIONS THROUGHOUT COUNTRY. ALREADY SOME EUROPEANS ON BASIS OF NO DISCERNIBLE EVIDENCE HAVE STARTED TALKING ABOUT AN IMPENDING

COUP.ALTHOUGH SANI WAS IN JAIL AT TIME OF MARCH 15
ABORTIVE COUP LAST YEAR, HE WAS AGAIN NAMED BY GOVERNMENT
AS BEING A FIGURE IN ONE OF THE OVERLAPPING PLOTS
UNEARTHED AT THAT TIME. SANI IS USUALLY CREDITED WITH
CLOSE TIES IN HAUSA COMMUNITY ABOUT WHICH DJERMA-DOMINATED
GON SHOWS ITSELF EXTREMELY SENSITIVE DURING PERIODS OF
POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY HERE.

3. IS SANI HAS ESCAPED AND IS IN LIBYA, IT WILL BE
INTERESTING, INTER ALIA, TO SEE EFFECTS ON ALLEGEDLY
IMPROVING NIGER-LIBYAN RELATIONS. KOUNTCHE HAS SAID
PRIVATELY THAT ONE OF THE MAIN REASONS HE HAD MOVED
AGAINST SANI IN 1975 WAS LATTER'S TIES WITH LIBYANS, HIS
PLANS TO NATIONALIZE NIGER'S MINERALS SECTOR, AND HIS
SECRET DEALS TO OPEN UP NORTHERN NIGER URANIUM TO
LIBYAN COMPANIES.DAVISON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 07-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Event:
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Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Review Release Event: n/a
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Secure: OPEN
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TAGS: PINT, NG, LY, (SIDO, SANI)
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